/41 cont'd/

554 of class antithesis, such as that of slaves versus masters, or serfs or tenant farmers versus landlords, which is the product of differences between the rich and the poor, does not appear among them. Every person, every family is a worker. There is no slavery but [567] only mutual assistance. The term "the poor and the poorer" /formulated by Dr. Sun Yat-sen/ is the most fitting phrase to be used in describing the Miao.

/42/ Chapter V. Daily Life

1. Diet

511 The life of the Miao people is very hard; they do not have
262 enough food. This hardship has created among them the habits of frugality. Except during feasts or festivals when they eat white, polished rice, they ordinarily eat rice gruel or other mixed grains three times a day. Ordinarily they do not have meat (except when they have good luck in hunting), and vegetables are also rare with the exception of some wild plants which they occasionally pick for [263] cooking. Salt, therefore, is usually used for a condiment while eating rice.

[527] It is only during feasts that they slaughter a cow or a pig and
262 have a lot to drink. The Miao do not know how to season, and
252 their cooking is difficult for an outside to eat. When they are entertaining guests, they usually cook the rice in a very special way. They put polished rice into a big pot. When it is half cooked, the rice is removed from the pot and dumped into a wooden cask, which is put back into the same pot and steamed with the half cooked rice in it. The wooden cask is about three ch'ih, or Chi- [418] nese feet, and is round. The bottom is pierced with small holes. When the water is boiling, the steam penetrates into the cask through the small holes, and the rice in the barrel is gradually cooked. It is said that this steamed rice is very delicious, but unfortunately we did not have the opportunity to taste it.

/19 cont./

M *101 CC 563 M [162] when trouble starts, their chiefs rebel. Wu Pan-sheng, Wu Pa-yüeh, Shih Liu-teng, and Shih San-pao were all He Miao, according to their own statements." Although the Miao in the three sub-prefectures are broadly divided into the Hung Miao and the He Miao, when one looks into their origins, besides these two subgroups, the Hung and the He, there appear to be Ch'ing Miao, Hua Miao, and Pe Miao mixed in with them. As they were small in number, they were less known. Moreover, the Hung Miao and the He Miao have a variety of other names. Yung-sui T'ing Chih /Annals of Yung-sui Sub-prefecture, 1908/ gives 22 different ones as follows:

M [167] (1) Hung /Red/ Miao. They originally came from Tung-jen, Kweichow. They are very numerous. Eastward their area extends to Ch'en-chou, westward to P'ing-t'ou, P'ing-ch'a, and Yu-yang native subdistricts /t'u szu/ in Szechwan, north to Pao-ching, south to Ma-yang, and southeast to Wu-chai subdistrict. This area measures 1,200 li in circumference, 300 li in length, and 120 li in width, within which confines resides this tribe.

M [131] [167] (2) Ch'ing /Green/ Miao. — This tribe originally came from Ch'ing-chen, Kweiyang. Men and women generally wear silver neckbands, and a rich woman wears as many as six or seven of them. In the first month of the year, they hold New Year parties at which men and women gather together, blowing reed flutes and singing and dancing for three days. The chicken yards are especially frequented ....

M [167] [462] [782] [769] (3) He /Black/ Miao. — This tribe originally came from Tu-Yün and Pa-chai in Kweichow. They live in such places as Chen-ch'i-so. The women till the land by day and spin and weave by night. Every thirteen years they sacrifice a cow to heaven, earth, and their ancestors, which is called "Ch'ih ku tsang /eating bull's entrails/." Moreover, they put the bones of pork, chicken, mutton and dog together with whole fowls including feathers and entrails in earthen jars until they decay. This is known as "sour food." They use little salt, which is substituted for by bracken ashes.

M [262] [263]

/76 cont./

252 [222] The bracken, chüeh ts'ai, is a wild plant. It is gathered and carried home. It is washed, and after being half cooked, it is strained and dried in the sun. Cooled overnight it is put in a jar, covered with tung leaves, and the jar stopped up with straw and turned upside down in a basin of water just as in making sour cooked fish.

263 The Miao's liking for sour flavor does not seem to be a natural tendency to like sour pungent things. It is probably due to their being in the interior, very far from the sea, where there are no salt wells near by and salt is difficult to obtain. Hence, the Miao were not acquainted with salty flavor. Today in the Miao language there is no distinction made between saltiness and bitterness. During the time when the Miao had no salt at all, for the most part they only had sour pungent foods to whet their appetite. It was so from generation to generation, and today, even though they have salt, they still retain the liking for eating sour pungent things.

264 [415] Formerly, the Miao did not use chopsticks. The cooked rice was turned onto a basin, around which the family members gathered, digging into the rice with both hands. Vegetables were placed in bamboo buckets and earthenware. When they 252 had meat they singed off the hair over the fire and ate it half 262 cooked. They also ate snakes and insects. Snakes were roasted; earthworms were pickled with salt; grasshoppers, bees, and grubs were either roasted or fried. They also mixed rice gruel with fish and maggots to eat, and considered this a delicacy, which was called yin. Rich families kept yin for several [556] generations. (1) /77/ Again, suckling pigs weighing more

1. Tien Ju-ch'eng in his Yen Chiao Chi Wen says: "The southern aborigines mixed buckwheat ashes with millet paste and let it ferment into a pungent agent, into which were thrown fish and

/131 cont./
*782 strung together in strings /skewers?/ of meat. There are 14 strings of seven slices each and 18 strings of nine slices each. The relatives by marriage, of a different surname, i.e. the mother's family and the wife's family, are invited to the function beforehand; and the mother's brother or the wife's maternal uncle are considered to belong to the lower generation for the ceremony.

On the first night the first part is performed, which they call the opening of the affair. A large table is set up in the middle of the house. On it are placed five bowls of wine and five bowls of meat, one bowl of sour soup, one plate of cut-up beef, and a wooden bucket on which is placed a dried rice shoot. [788] The sorcerer-priest's performance consists of first setting off firecrackers, next blowing a signal horn, and last beating a gong and drum, which is the end.

/132/ The second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth parts are performed on the second day. In the morning the second part [769] [776] is performed, which is the sacrifice to the grandparents and the house kuei. A small table is placed outside the main entrance. On it is placed an upper millstone upside down. A wooden bucket is placed on the stone, and on it are put a knife, two dried rice shoots, a few shoots of cow grass, and a sheaf of t'u-t'ou pai-yeh. There is also a tray with five cups of wine and a certain number of slices of cut-up beef. No beeswax is burned and the sorcerer-priest only utters an incantation and that is all.

[776] [263] The third part is the sacrifice to the thunder kuei. It is very important not to eat any salt, because of the Miao superstition that the thunder kuei is very much afraid of salt. (1)

1. See "Myths about the Flood, 1 and 2" in the chapter, "Legends." 1/1

A large table is also set outside the fire entrance /? huo men/ and under it are put a hoe, rain clothes, and a plow. Moreover, on the table is put a tile, in the center of which are put a few small lumps of charcoal on which to burn the beeswax. Then

1/1 [this chapter has not been translated - ANALYST]

[5 cont.] One difference is their fondness of
262 hot pepper, [6] of which they use a lot in their dishes. To whet
[263] their appetite while eating, they have a bowl of dried pepper
mixed with soup at the table, into which they dip every chopsticksful
of food. The second difference lies in the scarcity of meat,
their food consisting chiefly of vegetables grown by themselves
or bought from the market. The daily dishes are mostly sour
cabbage, sour soup, salted cabbage, preserved cabbage and
pepper mixed with beancurd in different styles of cooking. The
263 third difference is the scarcity of salt in their cuisine due to the
high price of salt in Kweichow. Even the well-to-do Miao-I use
it sparingly. They roll a lump of salt in a cooked dish once and
then save it for future use to last for a long time. The fourth
312 difference is their lack of water. They live in the high moun-
tains, hence the name "kao-shan Miao" [high mountain Miao],
and have to go down to the low land to get their water supply.
[515] The scarcity of water makes them reluctant to wash often. They
[271] are also used to drinking unboiled water and cold rice. Fifthly,
273 they are fond of wine, and their capacity being large, they use
big bowls but sip slowly, enjoying all the while. Often they are
dead drunk when they come back from the market place or from
a party.

291 2) Costumes. The various Miao-I groups retain the special
characteristics of their costumes, which have become the symbols
of their identification. The colors of their clothes are green,
blue, gray, black and white, the other pigments being unavailable.
The dress materials of the Miao-I in the northwest are mostly
[439] home-spun hemp fabrics or cotton cloth obtained from the
Chinese in the market place. In the southeast they produce
[294] cotton, and spin, weave and dye the cloth at home. They sew
the clothes themselves, there being no tailors. The men wear
[302] their hair in chignons piled upon the head and wrapped up in
turbans of blue cloth, which are not removed all year round and
look like basins. The costumes of the women are not as simple
as those of the men as they still retain their ancient styles and
forms, which are too elaborate to relate here. Except the I
women of the Chung-chia and Tung-chia, who are more progres-
sive and wear long jackets and trousers like the Chinese, all the

! [from the Chinese.-Analyst]

/346 cont./

224 484 juice of the plant prevented its being burned through before the meal was ready. As soon as the rice was cooked soft, the [252] Meau slit open the bamboo and emptied the contents upon a [824] large leaf, which served him as a plate. Then he put a little [415] of it on a small leaf, which he put aside. This was the offering to the spirits. Then the meal began. The rice was [782] formed into balls with the fingers and eaten with the hands. [264] Hospitably the chief offered me some of his meal, and he [574] helped himself heartily when I invited him to enjoy some of the sardines in oil that I had brought along. Whereas other [262] foreign peoples with whom I have dealt did not at all like European food and in particular sardines in oil, the Meau enjoyed everything tremendously.

[276] "When he had finally smoked his opium pipe, during which he attended to the fire from time to time, we lay down for our rest. It was somewhat disturbed at times, since, as a consequence of a head cold from which I was then suffering, I snored in my sleep, which caused the Meau to wake me up often. Moreover, I was heavier than he was, and consequently a deeper depression was made on my side, so that in his sleep he repeatedly rolled down on me, and I had no choice on my part but to wake him up often, which he did not seem to mind. We used these involuntary interludes of wakefulness to listen for the elephant, and we could hear his crackling until shortly before daybreak.

"With the first morning light, the Meau was up and dis- [262] appeared into the forest for 20 minutes and then returned with all kinds of leaves which, as vegetables, he mixed into the rice. Some of them tasted like sorrel, others like mint; in short, many resembled our seasoning herbs. Next he brought small, pepper-like fruits of a palm tree, the small, brown, salty-tasting fruits of a forest tree, and two fruits [263] of the wild lemon tree. He crushed these condiments and put them, like the various kinds of leaves, /Ills. 63-66 appear here on unnumbered pages/ /347/ into the rice. He [264] cooked an ample portion, enough rice for the midday meal

[Text continues on p. 473]

262 /374 cont./
252 Bamboo sprouts, which are cut up and cooked in water,
[351] are very popular. Furthermore, both in the rice fields and in
[245] the small house-gardens, the Meau plant bananas and pomelos,
which are only eaten raw, whereas bananas are also roasted or
fried in fat. In the gardens or in the poppy fields three varieties
● 263 of pepper are cultivated, which, like the hot chilies and a whole
series of wild fruits, likewise dried and pulverized, are used as
spices.

251 The Meau also preserve meat, and, to be sure, either by
[317] /375/ salting it or they let it dry in the sun or smoke it over the
[135] fire. Although salt springs occur naturally in northern Thailand
[171] and the Meau can also observe how the neighboring Lao obtain
[439] salt at such places, the salt needed is purchased from the traders
(see the chapter, "Trade") and not obtained locally.

252 Sugar cane is either eaten raw or sugar is made from it,
[262] which plays an important role among the Meau. For this the
sugar cane is peeled and cut into small pieces and pounded in
the rice mortar. The mass is then cooked for hours in large pans
until it is brown and begins to harden.

The Meau also know how to prepare yeast. For this purpose the granular seeds of a leafy plant are pulverized and kneaded to a dough with water. Some of the residue from the last alcohol distillation is added, and everything is left to ferment together for three or four days. Now the mass is dried
[251] in the sun or over the fire and finally poured into bamboo flasks where it is said to keep, ready for use, up to two years.

From all these ingredients, and, I might say, basic foods, the Meau know how to make many composite dishes, a number of which can be called national dishes.

[262] For festive days cakes (tsŭa) are made, three kinds of which are known.

1. Glutinous rice is ground to a fine flour. Now one takes nine parts of this flour and mixes it with one part of cooked and ground tubers. With the addition of water and a little sugar, the dough is kneaded, out of which small flat loaves about 12 centimeters in diameter are made. These are wrapped in green leaves and steamed.

/375 cont./

252 2. Rice is cooked and steamed until it is soft, and then it is beaten with sticks until a firm mush is produced. This dough is again shaped into small loaves which are either roasted at the open fire, fried in fat, or at least warmed up.

3. Ripe or almost ripe maize is ground, mixed with yeast, and kneaded into a dough. Now one lets the mass rest for half a day so that the yeast can work and finally proceeds exactly as in the first case.

252 262 /376/ The daily food, called ki šou, is made out of steamed rice to which some meat which was first browned in oil and then cooked in water is sometimes added. Green [263] vegetables and salt are also added to this "one-dish" meal. If the green vegetables are omitted, the dish is called kiń kā.

hŏŭ tău is the name for peeled and diced squash, which, with the addition of water, is prepared without any spices.

tšŏ kŏu is a mixture of green vegetables which one lets dry in the sun for half an hour, then pulverizes, and adds some salt and rice. The mass is put into bamboo flasks and [251] stored. After six days it has become sour and is then ready.

gă kŭo mō chău is nothing but meat that has simply been cooked in salt water.

tsī ĕn kā is another meat dish, for which the meat is salted in the raw state and then roasted over an open fire.

tšă pĕ vā is a piquant dish. For it, liver, heart, and kidneys are cooked tender, cut into pieces, and mixed. The whole has fresh blood poured over it, and one also adds two varieties of onions and the pepper-like fruits of a forest plant.

tšŏu tău is made out of the thick skin of large game, even rhinoceros, elephants, and buffalo, the skin of the pachyderms being regarded as a special delicacy, whereas the skin of snakes, tigers, and panthers is not used. First of all the skin must lie in running water for days, until all the particles of meat have rotted off. Then a large fire is made, the skin is put into it with the hair side down, and then the hair is scraped off with a knife. This cleaned and scraped skin is now cooked for ten to twenty hours in large kettles until it is soft. Finally, it is cut into small pieces which are eaten either fried in oil or only accompanied with a spicy sauce.